

Mercenary Groups Head to The Philippines “to Fight Groups Allied with the Islamic State”

Hired by "Military Contracting Company"

By [RT](#)

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A group of US volunteers is headed to the Philippines on a contract to fight groups allied with the Islamic State. One counterinsurgency specialist wonders if their enthusiasm will make up for the lack of logistics, weapons and training.

Those in the group have day jobs and regular lives but feel the need to help people endangered by militants who have pledged loyalty to the self-proclaimed Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIS/ISIL), a group in southern Florida told RT's Maria Finoshina.

They are led by Suleiman Yousef, a professional martial artist and firearms instructor who said he once trained with the mercenary outfit Blackwater. Yousef is no stranger to fighting Islamic militants. A tattoo on his neck proclaims, "Cut here."

"They're hurting kids, they're hurting innocent people," he says. "And they're saying it's in the name of Islam. It doesn't work that way."



Suleiman Yousef with RT's Maria Finoshina

Yousef and his teammates did not wish to reveal who hired them, but said they were paid “overhead.” Asked about their destination, he explains that the Philippines may not be in the headlines but that people there still had a problem with IS-affiliated fighters.

“There’s always a bigger and badder person. Right now we’re going to be that bigger and badder person,” he says. *“We need to do what we can with what we know, and do it for the greater good.”*

Though the Florida group has access to customized infantry weapons, US Marine Corps veteran-turned-military-scholar Jake Diliberto told RT it was a bad idea for people to go off to fight the IS on their own. Americans who seek to fight terrorists overseas would be better off enlisting in the military, he said, or joining mercenary and contractor outfits the likes of Blackwater.

“Those that choose to go independently actually have a tendency to create more havoc and more problems in the conflict zone than an organized military or defensive contracting company,” said Diliberto, a veteran of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Volunteers are driven partly by empathy for the victims shown on the TV screens and partly by fear and anxiety that the violence taking place overseas could come home to America, Diliberto explained. *“There is a need by some sort of more zealous, defensive Americans to protect their homeland against this kind of perceived threat,”* he said.

“For the most part, ISIS isn’t interested in attacking the US,” Diliberto added. *“They are interested in Raqqa, they are interested in northern Iraq. They are not interested in coming to New York City or Topeka, Kansas.”*

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